

Abstract

An annealing apparatus is provided for annealing metallic billets, particularly for use in annealing aluminum-containing billets. The apparatus comprises at least two contact elements or contact discs made of electrically conducting material. The contact elements are connected to a voltage source so as to provide electric current flow through the billet as it passes between the two contact elements. The material of the contact elements is a light metal, normally aluminum or an aluminum-containing alloy, such that the contact element material is matched to the material of the billet. In this manner, diffusion of the billet material into the contact element is substantially avoided.

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